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MEXICO THINK TANK

Top minds confer on what's trending in this dynamic destination – and beyond

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Cover Story

MEXICO THINK TANK

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COVER DESIGN BY Debbie Sheehan

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A sampling of all-inclusive properties with built-in appeal for Millennial vacationers



DESTINATIONS

CARIBBEAN, THE BAHAMAS AND BERMUDA



Guests play pool in the pool on the "Prude" beach side of Hedonism II in Negril, Jamaica.

CARIBBEAN ALL-INCLUSIVES For Your Millennial Clients

Resorts beckon Gen-Y guests seeking something new or out of the box.

ALL-INCLUSIVE RESORTS continue to gain favor with American travelers — and Millennials are leading the charge. **Travel Agent** did a little island-hopping to come up with a sampling of new and well-established properties that we believe have built-in appeal for Generation Y vacationers seeking authentic (and sometimes edgy) experiences.

Punta Cana, Dominican Republic

In an AAA survey released earlier this year, Punta Cana topped the list of international destinations clients are flocking to, based on member agencies' bookings. This Dominican Republic resort destination has one of the best-

connected airports in the Caribbean, plenty of golf courses and eco-adventure options and is only a 2.5-hour scenic drive from the lively, historic Santo Domingo. And, of course, there's an array of top-tier resort hotels, including the following three, which should please your Gen-Y clients.

HARD ROCK HOTEL PUNTA CANA: Music-loving Millennials should be impressed by the **Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Punta Cana's** amenities such as the signature Rock Spa, an 18-hole Jack Nicklaus-designed Hard Rock Golf Club at Cana Bay, music memorabilia and a Las Vegas-style casino — the largest in the Dominican Republic.

Guests can dance the night away at

the hotel's ORO Nightclub, designed to rival the top nightclubs of Las Vegas and Miami, with more than 14,000 square feet of space across two levels.

With an optional "European-style" bathing policy and a lively pulse, Eden is the place to go for a high-energy experience. This adults-only pool has a live DJ, full bar and Bali Beds for those seeking something a little more exclusive. Overall, there are 13 pools, four swim-up bars, a kids pool and lazy river. Additionally, dining is available throughout the resort's 10 restaurants, including the Brazilian steakhouse Ipanema, Asian teppanyaki-style Zen and Pizzeto, which serves brick-oven

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DESTINATIONS

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Chairman's Suites, which provide views from a private balcony, complete with outdoor Jacuzzi and dining table.

After a day at the beach, entertainment comes in the form of sunset champagne cheers at the 18-plus Hideaway, boogying at XS Disco Bar, live nightly performances and more.

Travelers have been flocking to the 228-room **Royalton Blue Waters** resort in Montego Bay since it opened in November. Here, guests can double up on fun at the adjacent **Royalton White Sands**, where they have full access to the main facilities, pools, restaurants, and more, including the **Royalton** lazy river, and fully serviced luxury cabanas with private infinity pools, flat-screen TVs and minibars.

Millennials with young families can opt for the one- to three-bedroom Presidential and Chairman's Suites, which include a walk-in closet, indoor Jacuzzi and handcrafted DreamBeds.

RIU REGGAE: Millennials looking to chill at one of Jamaica's newest all-inclusives might be interested in **Riu Reggae** in Montego Bay. The adults-only resort is a good fit for girlfriend or guys' getaways. It has 454 rooms, three infinity pools, two of these with adjacent swim-up bars, a gym and, a must for the social media generation, free Wi-Fi throughout.

The all-inclusive program covers



Guests at Riu Reggae get free entry and drinks at Riu Montego Bay's Pacha discotheque.

drinks and meals at the hotel's four bars and five restaurants, as well as exchange privileges with hotel **Riu Montego Bay**, in the same RIU resort complex. This grants free entry and drinks in the Pacha discotheque, as well as the nighttime shows and live music.

For friends' getaways, there are some family rooms that can accommodate up to five people. They comprise two bedrooms, one with a king bed and sofa bed, a second room with two single beds and two bathrooms.

Guests looking to relax with a cocktail might wish to sample the resort's two signature drinks. The Liquid Marihuana is made with pineapple juice, lemonade, orange juice, Blue Curacao, and coconut, dark and overproof rums. The Blue Coral consists of white rum, triple dry, coconut cream, pineapple

juice and Blue Curacao.

HEDONISM II: Occupying a stretch of white sand beach in Negril, Jamaica, **Hedonism II** is an adults-only, clothing-optional resort, a good fit for the Gen-Y traveler who wants to explore their sexuality in a safe and welcoming environment. The property's "mild" or "wild" (think nude) attitude allows guests to create an uninhibited experience at their own speed and comfort. Guests are invited to spend their days swimming, playing, dancing and indulging. Millennials love that it's a one-stop shop for fun.

They can leave the credit cards and cash behind as they chow down on unlimited, authentic, world-class Jamaican cuisine (we recommend the jerk chicken) and sip the bottomless, carefully crafted signature cocktails made with premium liquors and top-shelf brands such as Grey Goose and Johnny Walker.

Non-motorized water sports, including sailing, snorkeling, scuba diving, kayaking, paddle boarding and windsurfing are included in each stay.

We know Millennials love to be entertained, so nightly themed parties and shows allow maximum opportunities to let loose and explore hidden passions and fetishes — think leather and lingerie and...well, use your imagination.

When they're ready to get wild, the Rumping Shop is designed for pleasure and play, a place to experience one's deepest desires in a decadent, exotic setting. Open nightly from 10:30 p.m.

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AI Sol Tiara Cap Cana is an all-suite property, which hosts a variety of social activities around the main pool, such as foam parties, nightly entertainment and tropical cocktails.

DESTINATIONS



Nestled in a private cove in Cap Estate, Royalton Saint Lucia provides intimate spots for sunset-watching and exclusive waterfront views.

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to 3 a.m., the playroom affords the opportunity for young couples, single women and invited single men to explore and rediscover their personal boundaries in a safe space, complete with an L-shaped bed, two sex swings and a steamy glass shower for the guest who likes to get dirty. Remember, what happens at Hedo, stays at Hedo.

St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands

As a U.S. territory, passports aren't required for American citizens, making St. Thomas a hassle-free, easily accessible tropical destination for Millennial travelers. For first-time Caribbean travelers, it can also serve as an introduction to other island adventures.

SUGAR BAY RESORT & SPA: This 297-room, all-inclusive resort provides travelers with a value-added vacation experience. It offers a variety of amenities for those Millennials who want to take advantage of the island's exciting restaurants and nightlife in nearby Red Hook, take a day trip to sister island St. John to hike or a swim in the National Park or simply relax and work on their bragging-rights Caribbean sun tan.

Guests can unwind by one of the three pools sipping a rum cocktail, or take in the cool breezes and tranquil waters at the resort's secluded beach. With five gourmet restaurants onsite, including Shima, an Asian culinary experience with a sushi bar and Teppanyaki tables, there is something for every palate.

For those who want to dance the night away in St. Thomas, BLU, Sugar

Bay's recently opened nightclub, has a different musical style/rhythm each night, and the lively weekly Carnival night brings guests together with local performers. The resort's on-property spa provides rest, relaxation and renewal with signature treatments offering the ultimate in pampering and rejuvenation.

Saint Lucia

This island abounds with adventure options, wellness offerings, sporting events and culinary diversions, from eating like a local to a dine-around program at award-winning restaurants to the authentic village beach bash known as the Anse La Raye Fish Fry. These are four vacation aspects for which Millennials express a greater desire than their older counterparts, according to the Portrait.

ROYALTONS IN SAINT LUCIA:

The luxurious, yet laid-back, 352-room Royalton Saint Lucia opened in mid-

February and is a solid pitch for Millennials with children, with splash pads and waterslides, supervised kids' and teens' clubs and dining menus designed for younger taste buds.

For a quieter getaway, adults (ages 18 and older) can stay at the 104-room **Hideaway at Royalton Saint Lucia**, which has private infinity pools and an exclusive seafood grill. Offerings at Hideaway include yoga on the beach, mixology classes beside the pool and champagne toasts at sunset.

Suites at Hideaway use aromatherapy to greet clients each time they enter. Inside guests will find a Jacuzzi for two, a Royalton premium "DreamBed" with high-thread-count sheets and a selection of premium spirits. Twenty-four-hour room service is available. Also, Hideaway clients have access to butler service plus other extras such as afternoon hors d'oeuvres, exclusive à la carte restaurants and personalized beach bags.

Nestled in a private cove in Cap Estate, **Royalton Saint Lucia** provides intimate spots for sunset-watching and exclusive waterfront views, making it a suitable pitch for destination weddings as well. Beyond the beach, the resort has a Sky Wedding Terrace with views of Pigeon Island.

Culinary options include Calypso, a gourmet West Indies restaurant serving authentic dishes from the Caribbean, eight other signature Royalton restaurants and two all-inclusive food trucks.

—JOE PIKE

All-Inclusives Gaining Favor

THE POPULARITY OF all-inclusives continues to rise — with Millennials leading the charge. According to MMGY Global's 2016 Portrait of American Travelers, one in nine respondents (11 percent) listed "All-Inclusive Resort" as a primary purpose of at least one vacation during the past 12 months. This represents a 22 percent rise (2 percentage points) over 2015 and 2014. In 2013, the number was only 8 percent, or fewer than one in '12.

Millennials are the most enthusiastic about staying at an all-inclusive resort, with 14 percent citing that as a top vacation consideration, compared to 12 percent (still above average) for Generation Xers, 8 percent for Boomers and 5 percent for Matures.